I: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

of the grey hills, and we bivouacked with them. All through the night they kept watering their herds at the deep well-holes, and we heard the incessant creaking of the small wooden rollers in the primitive wooden bearings, with their dripping ropes, some eighty feet long.

A few hours' ride beyond Mayku' we entered the wide dark tableland of Bsayta, the flattened remains of what is probably the oldest mountain range in the Arabian peninsula. A few inconsiderable summits, covered with a fine film of sand, still rise from its surface, which extends for more than sixty miles—a perfectly level waste without water, without pasture, on which it seems to have hailed black gravel. At one stroke the blithe world was changed; all round us was desolation. But gloomy and eerie as Bsayta appeared at first sight, a few days in it taught me to love this waste, with all its hopeless melancholy. The solitude and stillness as of an abandoned planet broded over it. Now and then an oryx-antelope or an ostrich fled at our approach. Very rarely did we pass a shrub that was knee-high or see a green leaf or a flower. No bird sang here; even snakes and lizards avoided this waste. Occasionally in summer, it depended on the rainfall, there grew a strange, rich crop in Bsayta —the *samh*, a low small-leaved plant, on whose twigs small berries ripen, containing reddish-brown seed granules. These the Bedouins roast and grind into a dark, bitter flour. Kneaded with sheep butter and dates, or boiled in water into a sort of porridge, it becomes edible.

After renewing our water supply at the Hausa well, we pushed on toward Bir Bair and into the northwestern Wadi Sirhan, the proper grazing grounds of the Beni

2:Musil S-4,5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

16. Thou wilt comfort me whose love is ivory white
And who am still in torment, as those who appoint my road oppress me.

This poem was composed by Čen'ân âl Ṭajjâr and was recited to me by Prince an-Nûri.

Verse 1. *'Afaṣ*, the gallnut, and *zâǧ*, green vitriol (or copperas), powdered, are used to make ink. *Sǧile* is a sheet of paper. *Zîž* means dyed, blackened, covered with writing. 2. *Ḳâf* is a verse or a poem. *Swâhîǧ* are the torments of the soul, excitement, a passionate outburst. 3. The poet used to speed to his beloved, who dwelt far from his camp; therefore he had to sleep in the desert, often beside his she-camel which kneit, *mabrak*, over a snake hole, *ṭâǧ*. *Ṯenâje* are the four lower and four upper incisors. *Ṛamâlîǧ* means "perpetually moving or dreaming with the eyes half closed." Fair women are fickle in love and changeable, which causes the lover much anxiety. 4. *Mḳejṣ* or *meḳiṣ* are midsummer camping grounds. Ğaw Ferteī lies southwest of Ḥâjel. *Ṣarâhîǧ* (for *ṣaḥârîǧ*) are deep rifts in a rock, with narrow openings where the rain water keeps fresh for a long time. 5. *Ḥunṭa* is another name for wheat, *ḳamḥ*. The beloved maiden is evidently the daughter of a well-to-do Bedouin, as she can eat wheat-flour bread baked in the shape of thin cakes on a *sâǧ*, iron sheet about forty centimeters in diameter. The milk of young white she-camels is said to taste the best. 6. *Flâǧ*, or *felǧ*, for *ṭelǧ*, means snow or ice. *Šuḏḏab* are small pieces of dry *ṛaṛa* wood, from which the bark has been peeled off; they are of a glistening whiteness; *šâḏeb* (pl., *šuḏḏab*) is equivalent to *bejaṣ* (pl., *biṣ*), meaning "white." 7. *Ṭe'es* is a conical sand drift. Its sides have gentle slopes, are very soft, and when sprinkled by light rain, *wulâǧ*, shine with a peculiar pink glitter. The *sîžân*, calves, are round and plump, like the *darârîǧ* or rollers used for letting down the rope with the dip bucket. This roller rotates in holes in two posts which are set in the ground and with the roller form a triangle. 8. *Tenseṣ*, she lets down, is said of a woman who undoes her combed or plaited hair, allowing it to fall down her back. *Dâǧ* means, properly, the separate tresses of the combed hair; *demâlîǧ* those already braided. 9. The small rings worn above the ankles are usually of glass, but the wealthier women have them made of copper or even of silver, ornamented with fine chains from which hang tiny bells. These

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

The maiden longs for a word from her lover, who has gone with some traders in camels to Egypt, and urges the messenger carrying letters for the chief to hurry.

Zâ'û min al-'ejd w-mežfîni
w-munašširîn ad-dalâli
'allemi bihom bel-maḳâfîni
w-mrakkezîn al-maḳâmi.

After the holiday they departed, but in the opposite
Their best clothes donning. [direction,
Let me hear of their news, that they have encamped
And have erected a water hoist. [to stay

The maiden learns where her lover's kin have encamped. *Al-'ejd* is the holiday of *az-ẓaḥijje*, when a she-camel is sacrificed by the Bedouins to every member of their kin who has died in the past year. *Mežfîn* means that they have not followed the other Arabs in their forward movement but have taken the opposite direction. They encamped by a watering place and for a long period, hence *maḳâfîni*. The word *meḳṭân* designates a place where the Bedouins make a prolonged stay in summer time; thus *ḳaṭanna 'ala-l-Ḳâra* means "we camped a long time in al-Ḳâra." *Maḳâm* is the wooden apparatus for raising water, fastened above the edge of a deep well (see my *Arabia Deserta*, Fig. 35, p. 161). Such an apparatus is arranged only when the Arabs intend to stay at that particular well for some time. On that occasion they take out their best clothes and the women dress in their finest, *munašširîn ad-dallâl*.

Eḏ'û rê'i-š-šowše
an-nûri mâ ḥala' howšeh
jâ mušarroden lar-radi bowšeh
jâ howš at-turk jâ howšeh.

Wish long life to him with the short hair,
To an-Nûri — Oh, how graceful is he in the fight,
He who frees the herds captured by a wretch!
Ah, the fight with the Turks, ah, his fight with them!

Eḏ'û for *jâ ṭawîl al-'omr*. When going to battle every rider bares his head. The kerchief rests on his shoulders; the weight of the head rope hanging round the neck holds it to the body. *Šowše* means short, unbraided hair on the

233 some nights far out alone; *nazalow al-ǧaw w-ǧe'azzebân jiḥe-ǧûn ḥems aw semḥ*. A traveler who does not see the herds in a camp where he has stopped for the night is told when asking about them: "The camels sleep out in the loneliness guarded by our warriors, *al-bel 'azîb w-ǧenabha ra'ah*."

233 312 The watering of camels is done either at the wells or at rain ponds. If there is nobody at the well, it is called *firže*; if surrounded by a throng, the saying is: *"Hal-želîb 'alejh 'ark*, at this well there is a crowd (or noise)." A man called *ṛarrâf* crawls into the well and fills the leather bucket, *delw*, which is let down to him. The full bucket is pulled up by another man, *mattâḥ*, who empties it into a leather trough, *ḥowz*, and lets the emptied bucket down the well again, *faǧǧaḥa bel-bîr*. The larger the bucket and the deeper the well, the more men pull the rope, *ǧesnûn* or *saxxâǧin*. Often also the rope is tied to the saddle of a camel which is then made to pull.

Fig. 36—A water hoist, *maḳâm*.

406 In case the Rwala want to draw water from a deep well for some time they put up a water hoist, *na'ûr* or *maḳâm* (Fig. 36), over it. This consists of two stout poles, *'amûdên*, made fast in the ground in such a way that they lean over the well. In holes bored through these poles an iron rod, *muḫṭar*, is then fitted, with a wooden roller, *maḥâle*, over which runs the rope, *rše'*, holding the *delw*. "Put up the hoist" is expressed by a Rwejli with the words: *"Erḳeḳ an-na'ûr"* or *"raff an-na'ûr* (or *maḳâm*)."

312 Watering from an *'aḳîs* well causes the herdsmen much labor, as such wells are partially filled or even entirely caved in after each heavy rain and have to be cleaned or dug anew. Their depth varies from two to five meters; they are never walled around. The silt or earth dug out is usually just dumped about the mouth of the well, often forming a mound half a meter or a meter high. In this two or three passages are left